

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-13 /091 W

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R 231420Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8411

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2233

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SP SS MR AG

SUBJECT: GOM-SPANISH RELATIONS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SLOWLY

REF: (A) RABAT 1620, (B) RABAT 2079

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO SPANISH EMBASSY SOURCES, RELATIONS WITH MOROCCO CONTINUING TO RETURN SLOWLY TO NORMAL FOLLOWING THE STRAINS WHICH OCCURRED WHEN SPAIN REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE FEBRUARY 26 JEMAA SESSION. FISHING NEGOTIATIONS TO RESUME IN MADRID APRIL 26 AND BOU CRAA PHOSPHATES AGREEMENT READY FOR SIGNATURE. END SUMMARY

2. SPANISH EMBOFF SAID APRIL 22 THAT WHILE SKIES HAD CLEARED SOMEWHAT, THERE STILL CLOUDS. MADRID, MEANWHILE, STRICTLY "STICKING TO LETTER" OF MADRID ACCORDS. AS EXAMPLE OF "CLOUDS", SPANIARD CITED STICKY QUESTION OF FISHING RIGHTS. GOM RECORD ON PREVIOUS BILATERAL FISHING ACCORDS HAD BEEN BAD, HE RECALLED, AND MADRID THEREFORE PROCEEDING WITH GREAT CAUTION IN PRESENT TALKS. SPANISH AMBASSADOR INDICATED APRIL 20 THAT NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO RESUME APRIL 21 IN MADRID, NOW POSTPONED
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UNTIL APRIL 26. HE EXPECTED THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE OF A

TECHNICAL NATURE AND DID NOT ANTICIPATE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT NOW.

3. ANOTHER IMPORTANT UNRESOLVED PROBLEM IN BILATERAL RELATIONS, ACCORDING SPANISH EMBOFF, WAS EXPROPRIATED SPANISH LANDS, MAINLY IN NORTHERN MOROCCO. GOM AND FRANCE HAD SETTLED SIMILAR PROBLEM RECENTLY, SPANISH EMBOFF NOTED, BUT GAVE NO INDICATION THAT ANY PROGRESS BEING MADE BY SPAIN ON THIS QUESTION.

4. ON POSITIVE SIDE, SPANISH AMBASSADOR TOLD ME APRIL 20 THAT BOU CRAA NEGOTIATIONS WRAPPED UP AND AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED SHORTLY. KING CHAIRED WORKING SESSION ON GOM-GOS ECONOMIC ACCORDS APRIL 19, FOLLOWING WHICH HE MET WITH SPANISH AMB. COMMERCE (AND MINES) MINISTER GHISSASSI MENTIONED TO ME IN PASSING ON APRIL 20 THAT HE WOULD BE SPENDING 48 HOURS IN MADRID DURING NEXT FEW DAYS, WHICH SEEMS TO POINT TO HIS INVOLVEMENT IN SIGNING OF FINAL ACCORD. SPANISH EMBOFF, MEANWHILE, CLAIMED TO BE UNINFORMED AS TO HOW MAURITANIANS WOULD ENTER BOU CRAA PICTURE, THEY WOULD HAVE TO BUY IN.

5. COMMENT. WHILE HONEYMOON PERIOD WHICH FOLLOWED SIGNING OF NOVEMBER MADRID ACCORDS CLEARLY OVER, THERE SEEMS AMPLE ROOM FOR TWO SIDES, THROUGH HARDNOSED NEGOTIATION, TO COOPERATE IN IMPORTANT FIELDS. SPANISH, HOWEVER, HAVING LOST LEVERAGE WITH FINAL PULLOUT FROM SAHARA, AND NON-COOPERATION ON SAHARA CONSULTATION ISSUE, MAY NO LONGER BE IN A POSITION TO CAPITALIZE ON PRIVILEGED STATUS THEY ONCE ENJOYED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ECONOMIC COOPERATION, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976RABAT02233
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760156-0795
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760429/aaaaaydd.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 RABAT 1620, 76 RABAT 2079
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <07 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOM-SPANISH RELATIONS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SLOWLY
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, MO, SP, SS, MR, AG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006